

Food and Nutrition Services: REPLACEMENT BENEFITS Q&A

Hurricane Matthew

1. **Can FNS recipients request Replacement FNS benefits in a county other than the county they live and receive FNS?** *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes, current FNS recipients can apply for replacement benefits in any county. The county taking the request for replacement benefits must not take ownership of that case in NCFast.

2. **What is the date of the “incident” for replacement benefits?** *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

In regard to replacement benefits, the date of the incident is the date the recipient states they lost their food.

3. **New USDA Interpretation: Can a recipient that has already received their October FNS benefits request a replacement?** *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes. Ask the client the date food was lost and the dollar amount lost. Replace the benefit amount the household states was lost, not to exceed household's monthly allotment. (It is not a requirement to check ebtEDGE.)

4. **New USDA Interpretation: If a client has not received October FNS benefits are they still eligible for a replacement?** *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes. Ask client the date food was lost and dollar amount lost. Process a replacement for September benefits based on client's statement of food amount lost, not to exceed the household's monthly allotment. (It is not a requirement to check ebtEDGE)

5. **If a September replacement benefit was issued for Tropical Storm Hermine, can the household request another replacement for Hurricane Matthew for the same month?** *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes.

Will NC FAST allow a second replacement for the same month? *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes.

6. **Are replacement benefits only for the counties approved for the Individual Assistance Declaration by the President?** *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

No, the individual manual replacement benefits are for any recipient in any county.

7. **If a client request a replacement of benefits can the affidavit be mailed to the client and does the date of the call protect the 10 days?** *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes, an affidavit (DSS-1678) can be mailed to the client as long as the request is made within ten calendar days of the incident (the loss of food).

Do not issue a replacement if the agency does not receive the signed affidavit (DSS-1678) within ten calendar days from the date the replacement request was made. (FNS Manual Sect.910) The affidavit does not need to be notarized.

8. If a case terminated the end of September (they are not active in October) can they receive replacement benefits for September? *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes, they can as long as they state they had a food loss from the benefits they received in Sept. This is true for any recipient, including ABAWD that have used their three months.

9. If a September FNS application was denied can that individual receive replacement benefits? *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*

No, if the application was denied, then no benefits were issued, so there are no benefits to replace. That person can make a new application at any time per policy.

10. Do clients need to provide a list of lost food? *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*

No. Lists for lost food are NOT to be requested.

11. Can non-merit employees process replacement benefits or Disaster FNS? *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*

No. Only merit based employees can process replacements or Disaster FNS.

12. How do we issue replacement benefits for cases with claims established? *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*

Issue the amount of food the client states they loss, not to exceed the amount of benefits the client actually received.

13. How do we process replacement benefits for (elderly) SNAP recipients? *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*

SNAP replacement benefits should be processed the same way that Simplified Reporting benefits are replaced.

14. If recipient is denied replacement benefits, do they get notification? *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*

A replacement, unlike an application, does not require a denial notice. If a replacement is started and it is determined the client should not receive the replacement, such as the client has already received a replacement for the same disaster, the worker would document the case and delete the replacement evidence.

15. How are September replacement benefits issued for cases that are currently closed? *(Posted on 10/14/2016)*

Workers should reactivate the closed case, making sure the case is in active status. Follow the steps in the Job Aid: *Issuing Replacement Benefits*. Use the reason of "Food destroyed in a disaster". The evidence must be applied and approved by the Supervisor on the same day.

(Updated on 10/17/2016)

If this process does not work please call NC FAST Help Desk and choose option #1 for Disaster questions. *(Updated on 10/18/2016)*

16. Will the replacement period extend beyond 10 days? *(Posted on 10/14/2016)*

A waiver is in development to submit to USDA requesting an extension of the 10 day replacement timeframe for counties that have an Individual Assistance Declaration. If approved by USDA, the waiver is only applicable for IA counties, not statewide.

17. How should counties that were not part of the disaster area verify power outages for benefit replacement requests? (Posted on 10/14/2016)

The utility companies asked that such requests not be submitted as they do not have the capacity to provide timely responses due to other disaster related priorities. The county's local Emergency Management Team is the best point of contact for such information.

18. What are the reasons why a replacement request would not process? (Posted on 10/14/2016)

Check case for accurate and complete information and ensure the Supervisor approves on the same day.

19. Can clients that receive replacement benefits for September also receive D-FNS in October? (Posted on 10/17/2016)

Yes, receipt of September replacement does not exclude them from receiving DSNAP, if the case was closed in September.

20. Does the replacement affidavit require client's signature? (Posted on 10/17/2016)

Yes

21. Will the state allow other staff to approve replacement benefits other than Supervisors and Lead Workers? (Posted on 10/17/2016)

No

22. Can we mail the replacement affidavit to clients that cannot come in the office, and process it when it is returned? (Posted on 10/17/2016)

Yes. The affidavit can be mailed to the client. It must be returned within ten calendar days from the date the report is filed. Refer to FNS Manual section 910.

23. Will there be any changes to the current 10 day replacement period since additional counties are being added to the list of IA counties? (Posted on 10/18/2016)

As new counties are included on the IA county list they will be added to the 10 day extension waiver. Remember the 10 days starts from the date the household reports they lost food, which may or may not be on 10/8/2016. (See question #2 above) If there are questions, please contact OST.

24. What happens if a client comes in to apply for replacement benefits before the county receives IA designation and is turned away because it is beyond the 10 days of their food loss, then the next day county receives the IA designation? (Posted on 10/18/2016) (Updated on 10/19/2016)

Counties can have the client complete the affidavit, explaining that it can only be processed if or when the county is approved for the Extension Waiver.

If no extension is granted then replacement benefits will not be issued. Remember the 10 days starts from the date the individual states they lost their food.

25. What is the process when a client states they were unable to retrieve their EBT card during evacuation and need a replacement? (Posted on 10/18/2016)

The EBT Call Center can order a replacement EBT card if the EBT account has already been established. The client must be able to verify the SSN, DOB and the mailing address on the EBT Account.

26. Can clients request replacement FNS benefits through the EBT Call Center? (Posted on 10/18/2016)

Yes. Clients can contact the EBT Call center to request an affidavit to report food loss. This information will be shared with NC DSS and affidavits with the original date of request will be mailed to the client. The client must sign and return the mailed affidavit as outlined in FNS policy. NC DSS will provide counties with the information of those clients who were mailed affidavits.

27. Can NC DSS send affidavits to non-impacted counties to key? (Posted on 10/18/2016)

Yes, this will be coordinated through the Director's Association.

28. Can a household, such as an ABAWD, that is reassessed and determined ineligible for September benefits be issued replacement benefits for September. (Posted on 10/19/2016)

No, if an assessment is done on a case and it is determined to be ineligible for September FNS benefits, the household would not be eligible for replacement benefits.

29. What steps should an assisting county take if they question the issuance amounts when keying data for IA counties? (Posted on 10/25/2016)

Call the NC FAST Help Desk and choose option #1 for Disaster questions.

AUTOMATIC (MASS) FNS REPLACEMENT BENEFITS

1. Should counties continue processing recertifications? (Posted on 10/12/2016)

Yes, it is very important that recertifications are processed in the event an Automatic (Mass) FNS replacement occurs, these cases will be included in the batch. Any recertification keyed after the Automatic (Mass) FNS replacement batch will require the replacement to be manually keyed by the county.

2. What do we do with affidavits received, but not keyed if we do Mass Replacement? (Posted on 10/13/2016)

Per FNS Manual Section 910.01C replace benefits within ten calendar days of the report or within two days of receiving the DSS-1678 whichever is later. Per 910.04 if a disaster allotment (mass replacement) is issued prior to issuing the manual replacement, deny the manual replacement allotment. You will need to document in NC FAST.

3. Can an active FNS household receive a September replacement and an October supplement?
(Posted on 10/24/2016)

Yes. Replacement benefits are for Sept. food loss. The supplement ensures the household receives the maximum FNS benefits based on their household size. The permits all households to receive the maximum allotment for October, whether regular or disaster issuance.

4. Will counties have any access to reports that show the replacements for September? *(Posted on 10/24/2016)(Modified on 10/25/2016)*

Yes, the report is also available on FAST Help under: *REPORTS > DISASTER REPORTS > September Cumulative Manual Replacements.*